

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 243814

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, ABRD, LA

SUBJECT: VISIT OF WORLD BANK TEAM TO LAOS

1. NICOLAS GORJESTANI OF WORLD BANK HEADQUARTERS IN WASHINGTON CALLED ON DESK OFFICER SEPTEMBER 29 TO SAY THAT HE AND TEAM OF FOUR OTHER WORLD BANK OFFICIALS WOULD VISIT LAOS FOR APPROXIMATELY THREE WEEKS IN OCTOBER. GORJESTANI REFERRED TO DECISION ANNOUNCED BY WORLD BANK AT MANILA MEETING IN APRIL OF 1975 THAT BANK WOULD CONSIDER FUNDING UP TO 15 MILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF PROJECTS IN LAOS. THIS DECISION HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED. HOWEVER, WORLD BANK HAS PLANS FOR PROJECT IN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR. PLANS WOULD CALL FOR IDA 50-YEAR LOAN WITH GRACE PERIOD OF 10 YEARS AND INTEREST OF 3/4 OF 1 PERCENT. AMOUNT OF LOAN AND SPECIFICS OF PROJECT HAVE NOT YET BEEN DECIDED. PURPOSE OF WORLD BANK TEAM VISIT IS TO DISCUSS PROJECT WITH LAO OFFICIALS. GORJESTANI STATED THAT WORLD BANK ENVISAGED BEGINNING PROJECT SOMETIME IN CALENDAR YEAR 1977, DEPENDING ON AVAILABILITY OF IDA FUNDS.

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2. GORJESTANI SPOKE TO SEVERAL STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICERS WHO WERE RECENTLY IN LAOS AND ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT STATE OF LAO ECONOMY. HE STATED THAT WORLD BANK TEAM PLANS TO TALK TO BOTH WESTERN AND BLOC COUNTRY EMBASSIES DURING THEIR VISIT TO LAOS IF LAO OFFICIALS PERMIT THIS. GORJESTANI INDICATED THAT WORLD BANK PROJECT HAS BEEN COORDINATED WITH UNDP IN LAOS. KISSINGER

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